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STAY IN TOUCH

Fresh & Fab

By Susan Stapleton

The Beatles LOVE still dazzling after 10 years

Photo by Nick Coletsos/Sun Media Productions

The Mirage
7 & 9:30 p.m. Thurs.-Mon., $79-$180 plus tax and fee. 702.792.7777

EVEN CLASSIC SONGS from The Beatles need a revamp once in a while. Cirque du Soleil did just that with its show *The Beatles LOVE* at The Mirage, all in time for its 10th anniversary celebration on July 14. That gives the nearly 8 million people who have seen more than 4,500 performances a new reason to get a glimpse of The Beatles, and the Canadian entertainment company's vision of some of the most iconic songs from the band's catalog.

Changes touch just about every corner of the show, which is set in the round, including new acts performed to different songs from The Beatles' epic catalog, spruced-up costumes and refreshed choreography and technology, all serving as a backdrop to the group's musical revolution. Musical director Giles Martin, the son of the legendary Beatles producer Sir George Martin, remixed the show's entire soundtrack, which earned three Grammy Awards.

John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr play central characters in this 90-minute show—they can be heard in banter recorded from studio sessions and seen on scrims and video displays throughout the theater. The Cirque acrobatics in conjunction with their remastered songs were recently redone by NappyTabs, the Emmy award-winning choreographers of *So You Think You Can Dance*. New visuals hand-drawn by Dandypunk, which pop up on 20 new projectors as well as on the floor of the main stage, include flowers that performers dance with.

Even acts in the show come in quartets to match the trailblazing band, whether it's four female aerialists swinging in and out of the arms of one man during "Something," the act with four roller skaters catching new heights off of skateboarding ramps during "Help!" or a bed filled with four children riding atop a wave of billowing white fabric that rolls like the sea over the audience during the psychedelic "Within You Without You."

Just as much a part of the fabric of The Beatles is the '60s, from Liverpool and swinging London with its mod culture to the revelry of Beatlemania, all represented throughout the show. Umbrellas, children without faces, dancing instruments and those signature mop tops all make appearances.

During "Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds," Lucy does indeed fly in one of the most choreographed pieces in the show, with a cast in a kaleidoscope of colorful costumes. A Little Richard-esque character tap dances into a white puddle of light that splats as he jumps inside, a segue into "Lady Madonna." Sgt. Pepper himself parades around the stage during a grim Dickens-esque scene during "Eleanor Rigby," complete with bungee-jumping aerialists.

Other acts are seductive, such as the couple dancing to "Yesterday," perhaps the most poignant point in the show, or the lovers in sweetly sorrowful "Blackbird."

Several songs are new to the show, including "Twist and Shout" with some breakdancing, a Volkswagen Beetle "beep-beep, beep-beep, yeah-ing" across the stage and lots of twisting to boot.

Any ode to The Beatles should end with a rain of confetti and the 77 artists in the show parading about the stage to "Love Is All You Need." Here's to another 10 amazing years.

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QUICK GUIDE

The Beatles LOVE

by Cirque du Soleil

Legendary Songs Come to Life

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HEAR, THERE AND EVERYWHE

By **Brock Radke**

Meticulous detail ensures **The Beatles LOVE**'s soundtrack will continue to enthrall listeners

The musical reputation of **The Beatles LOVE** is peerless. What other Las Vegas Strip production show boasts a customized soundtrack that has tallied three Grammy Awards? It's difficult to believe today that when Cirque du Soleil and Apple Corps, the Beatles' production company, teamed up to create and launch *LOVE* in 2006, their hopeful claim that it would run for a decade in Las Vegas was met with skepticism and even doubt. Twelve years later, it is nothing less than an institution on the Strip and around the world, one of the most popular productions in the city's legendary entertainment history.

The iconic and beloved catalog of Beatles music has always been the foundation of the show and we're all familiar with these songs. What you might not know is that the *LOVE* theater is built to be the best possible audio environment to consume those songs, and that ambitious claim comes straight from the band, their late producer Sir George Martin and his son Giles Martin.

It's well-documented that the *LOVE* soundtrack is a different way to experience the Beatles. George Martin layered "Get Back," "Twist and Shout," "Strawberry Fields Forever," "Come Together" and everything in between with various sonic parts and pieces from other songs to create a singular sound collage for the show. For example, the *LOVE* version of "Drive My Car" contains a saxophone track from "Savoy Truffle" from the Beatles' 1968 *White Album* and a guitar solo borrowed from "Taxman," the opener from 1966's *Revolver.*

But that approach is just the beginning of the creative genius of Martin, the great arranger, composer and engineer dubbed "the Fifth Beatle," and his son Giles, who has taken up the mixing mantle since his father's passing in 2016. That same year, the show unveiled a muscular revamp focused on the musical experience. The 2,013-seat theater-in-the-

RE

round—the biggest venue of all Cirque productions on the Strip—updated the audio system to include 6,400 new speakers, including two in the headrest of each seat. Below the theater in the playback room, where the *LOVE* team deftly manages the music and all audio cues throughout the show, there's a replica of one of the recording studios at Abbey Road in London, where the band recorded nearly all of their albums from 1962 to 1970. Before every show, those in-house engineers check every area to confirm the purest sound is available for everyone in the audience, and there's even a mobile speaker setup for ticketholders who take in the show from a wheelchair.

And about that show refresh from a couple of years ago: It wasn't just about adding new and innovative technology to the venue. The Martins remixed all 32 songs and segments in the show, truly starting from scratch—track by track, using only the original Beatles tapes. That's why the show's audio team believes this warm, welcoming theater at The Mirage on the Las Vegas Strip is the purest place in the world to listen to the Beatles' music; there's only one layer of production, that unique Martin mix, between the band's original recordings and the audience's ears.

You already know what a wonderful, resonant experience awaits at *The Beatles LOVE*. Now you know why.

The Mirage, 7 & 9:30 p.m. Tues.-Sat., additional 7 p.m. show Feb. 4, $79-$180 plus tax and fee. 702.792.7777

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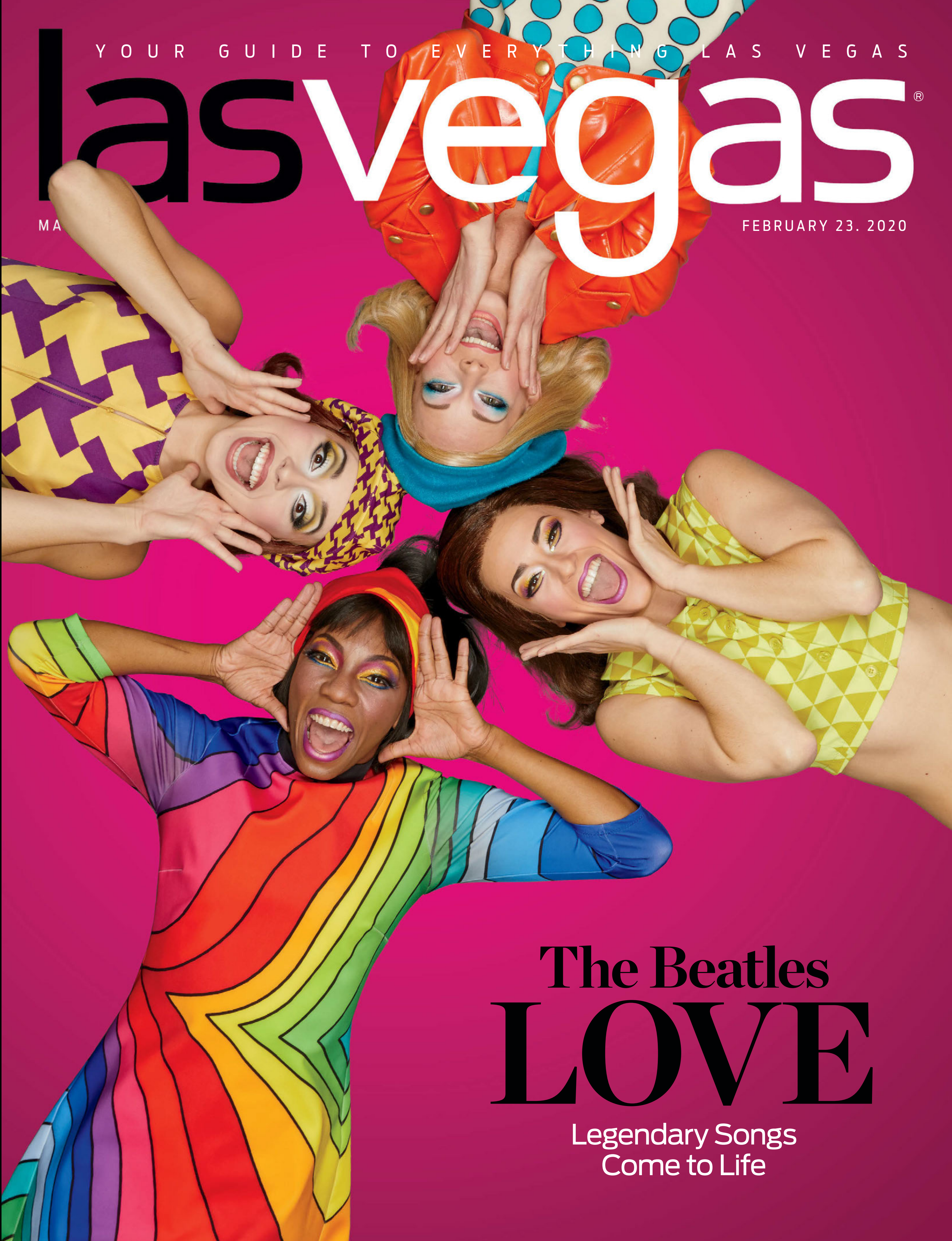


The Beatles LOVE

Legendary Songs Come to Life

CONTENTS

40
The Beatles LOVE

departments

10 **on the scene with brock radke**
Q&A: Criss Angel

14 **dwell**

16 **spotlight**
Entertainment Highlights

24 **downtown life**
FireHouse

26 **cheers**
Imbibe: Mama Rabbit
Nosh: Guy Fieri's Vegas Kitchen & Bar

30 **friends with benefits**
Carrie Johnson

32 **on and off the strip**
Joël Robuchon

34 **retail therapy**
Suit Up

40 **features**
The Beatles LOVE
OYO Hotel & Casino
Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition

47 **showbiz weekly**

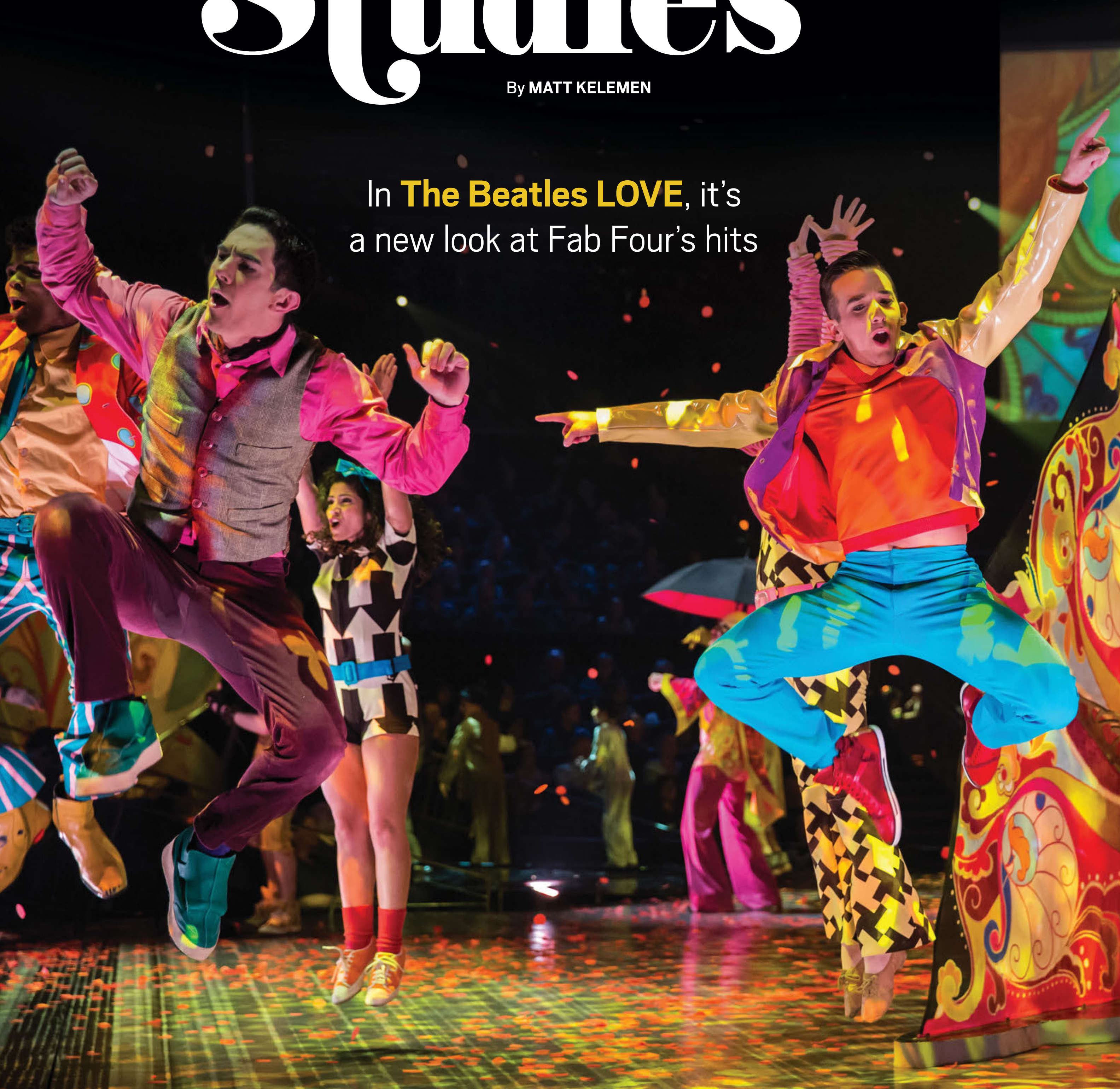
71 **out & about**

Photo by Matt Beard

Character Studies

By **MATT KELEMEN**

In **The Beatles LOVE**, it's a new look at Fab Four's hits



PICTURE YOURSELF in a boat on a river with tangerine trees and marmalade skies. Somebody calls you; you answer quite slowly … and it's Father McKenzie, writing the words of a sermon that no one will hear. There are plenty of people near, however, as he is in the midst of a tableau set to the tune of “Eleanor Rigby” during Cirque du Soleil's *The Beatles LOVE*. The iconic, imposing character from *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* also has four arms, with one clutching a Bible and one holding an umbrella reminiscent of the ones the Fab Four wielded on the cover of *Beatles '65*.

Paul McCartney doesn't describe Father McKenzie wiping the dirt from his two pairs of hands as he walks from the grave, though. That's a creative liberty, with several theories best related by the actor who plays him, Noah Bremer.

“I've been given several answers and I have my own,” says Bremer, who first joined Cirque as part of touring show *Varekai* in 2011 and became part of *LOVE* three years ago. “One of the ideas is that he's moving so fast with his gesturing and with his preaching and proselytizing that the eyes see four (arms in a blur). Another, which is my personal favorite, is that it's how the Beatles see Father McKenzie, combining a Buddhist god with a Catholic one.”

Regardless of symbolism, Father McKenzie is one of the most recognizable characters from a Beatles song in *LOVE*, a “splash of darkness” amid the kaleidoscope of colors as Bremer points out. He is fully immersed in his character while performing.

“With my actor brain on, I'm actually enjoying trying to set people straight,” says Bremer. “I get them on the right path, and there's a joy in them being disobedient because I get more fired up. It's a very interesting dynamic. I see everybody playing and having a good time, and I have to do my best to put a stop to that. Of course, I'm unsuccessful.”

The Mirage
7 & 9:30 p.m.
Tues.-Sat., 7 p.m. show
only Feb. 26, starting at
$79 plus tax and fee.
702.792.7777

Bremer attended University of Minnesota where the California native became active in a group called Live Action Set. One of his higher-profile gigs has been a supporting role as Dan in Maria Bamford's Netflix series *Lady Dynamite*. “It was great to meet her,” says Bremer. “She was unique. She's exactly like she is on the show.”

Like many of his Cirque du Soleil siblings, Bremer has a thirst for theatrical expression. He's a conduit to Las Vegas for his Minnesota performing family, with one of his most recent projects being an interactive production titled *Oakey Family Supper Club*.

“I'm a creative person, and I'm compelled to always be making and working, and thinking and devising projects,” says Bremer. “I've really got the best of both worlds, playing to an audience that ranges from fans who saw the Beatles perform to kids for whom it's an entire different experience … It all kind of intertwines, doesn't it?”

Photo on left courtesy of MGM Resort International, photos on right by Matt Beard

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JUNE 12, 2022

Todd English's Olives

Mediterranean Classics Par Excellence

Sweet 16

As the anniversary nears, **The Beatles LOVE** by Cirque du Soleil shows its everlasting appeal

By **Matt Kelemen**

Photo by Ethan Miller/Getty Images

John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr are ever-present in spirit at The Mirage, where Olivia Harrison recently made a pilgrimage to revisit the show that pays tribute to her late husband's band. She was in Las Vegas to accept a Grammy for *All Things Must Pass: 50th Anniversary Edition* when she attended an April 2 performance of *The Beatles LOVE* by Cirque du Soleil, re-experiencing "Something" as only Mrs. George Harrison can.

While there's nothing you can do that can't be done in Las Vegas, re-experiencing *The Beatles LOVE* should be high priority. Now nearing its 16th anniversary, having debuted June 30, 2006, a shot of *LOVE* is just the antidote for post-pandemic blues, or anything else that ails us.

That antidote begins musically when the Beatles' career was coming to an end. After the audience is beckoned to "Come Together," Starr's instantly recognizable pounding from "Get Back" kicks *LOVE* into

overdrive. That final song from the final Beatles studio album paves the way for the dancing, soaring, rolling and strolling cast members to parade onstage. The *Let It Be* rooftop concert at Abbey Road Studios inspires the scenario, but the abstract narrative travels back to 1940s Liverpool, where "A Day in the Life" is drawn on to reflect the turbulence of the war-torn time the Fab Four were born into.

It's also where Father McKenzie appears, writing words for a sermon that no one will hear. He's one of many characters that come to life in the show, including sly Doctor Robert, expectant Lady Madonna, ostentatious Sgt. Pepper and stuffy Mr. Piggy. A whole gang of sea creatures float in the theater-in-the-round during "Octopus's Garden" while a winged creature tries to fly in the dead of night during "Blackbird."

There are some truly magical moments where technology and performance meet, most sensually during "While My Guitar Gently Weeps." An aerialist interprets "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" above a performer bound to the ground with wheels. Groupies and Liverpool Kids are fashionably attired as they flash mob onto the stage for impromptu dance parties, silk rope artists slide and slither beneath golden rays during "Here Comes the Sun," and if there's a Blue Meanie onstage during "Glass Onion," it does not mean Pepperland is in danger. Daredevils get high with a little help from Beatles music, trampolines, bungee cords and skate ramps. One particularly poignant segment features a trapeze duo performing to McCartney's "Yesterday."

While the song is not about Sir Paul's love for trapeze swinging, he is still going strong. Starr recently branched into issuing NFTs featuring digitized versions of his paintings and drum tracks. Harrison is the latest to win a Grammy (for "Best Boxed or Special Limited-Edition Package") and Lennon's "Give Peace a Chance" was performed by 1,000 musicians last month in Turin, Italy, for the opening of the annual Eurovision Song Contest. The Beatles are as relevant as ever, and the best way to reconnect with them while in Vegas is with *The Beatles LOVE*.

The Mirage
702.792.7777

Photos by Matt Beard Photography

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MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 30. 2022

Treat Worthy!

When It Comes to Costumes, It's Halloween Every Day on the Strip

▸ Sgt. Pepper of Cirque du Soleil's 'The Beatles LOVE'

Contents

8
7 Days

11
Spotlight

24
Cheers
The Cocktails of Lavo

26
Friends With Benefits
Daniel Ponsky

28
Nosh
Beauty & Essex

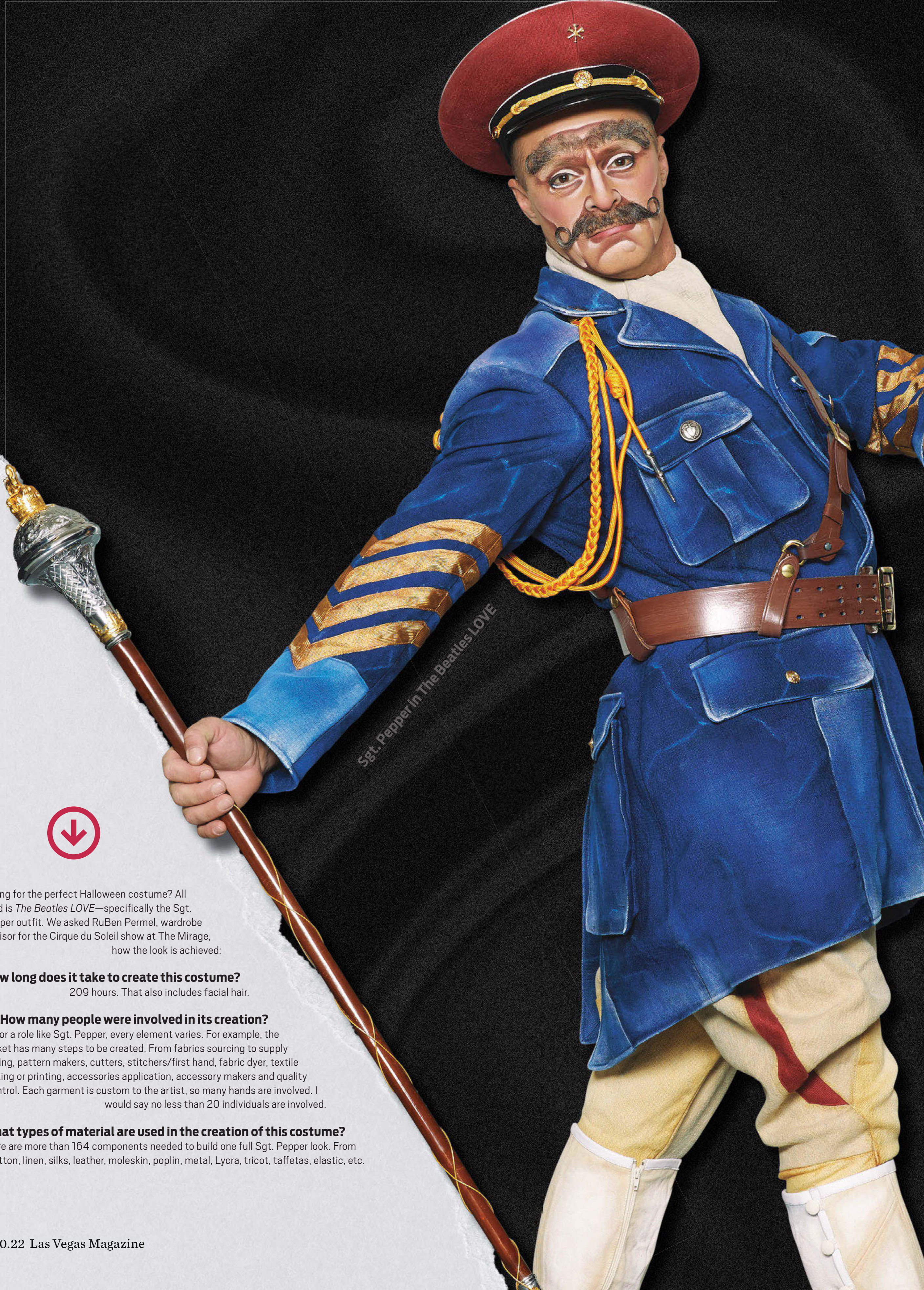
32
Features
- Get Some Halloween Costume Ideas from These Vegas Shows
- Q&A: Jeff Dunham
- Bellagio Conservatory & Botanical Gardens

44
LVing

49
Showbiz
Weekly Listings

32
Get in Character

Jeff Dunham cover (where applicable) by Richard McLaren
The Beatles LOVE *courtesy photo,* The Beatles LOVE *cover (where applicable) by Matt Beard*
Wonder World cover (where applicable) courtesy photo, Toscana Ristorante & Bar by Eataly cover photo (where applicable) by OSHANA



Sgt. Pepper in The Beatles LOVE

Looking for the perfect Halloween costume? All you need is *The Beatles LOVE*—specifically the Sgt. Pepper outfit. We asked RuBen Permel, wardrobe supervisor for the Cirque du Soleil show at The Mirage, how the look is achieved:

How long does it take to create this costume?
209 hours. That also includes facial hair.

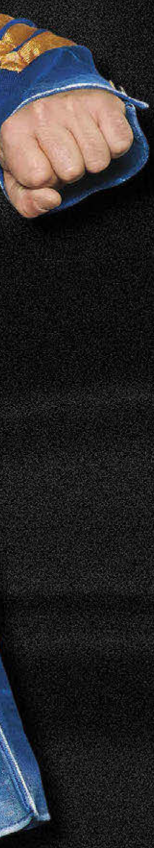
How many people were involved in its creation?
For a role like Sgt. Pepper, every element varies. For example, the jacket has many steps to be created. From fabrics sourcing to supply kitting, pattern makers, cutters, stitchers/first hand, fabric dyer, textile painting or printing, accessories application, accessory makers and quality control. Each garment is custom to the artist, so many hands are involved. I would say no less than 20 individuals are involved.

What types of material are used in the creation of this costume?
There are more than 164 components needed to build one full Sgt. Pepper look. From cotton, linen, silks, leather, moleskin, poplin, metal, Lycra, tricot, taffetas, elastic, etc.

GET IN CHARACTER

These shows will give you plenty of Halloween costume ideas

By Ken Miller



Courtesy photo

Few holidays engender the kind of excitement Halloween does in Las Vegas. Yes, we host a party like no other city in town. But it's primarily the costumes that get everyone pumped. And the level of commitment some partiers put into their getups is seriously inspiring. Gone are the princess and Mickey Mouse costumes we used to wear as kids; these are transformations that make even the most jaded Halloween fan do a double take.

Every year, this city sees thousands of mind-blowing renditions of everything from nurses to superheroes, many of which end up earning their wearers a grand prize at the parties they attend. But here's the challenge for the serious Halloween fan: How do you improve on last year's costume? Where will your next stroke of inspiration come from?

On that note, might we suggest seeing a Las Vegas production show—or two or three? Because if there's one thing we at *Las Vegas Magazine* know for sure, it's this: Shows in Las Vegas feature some of the most amazing, unique costume designs in the world. If you need inspiration, check out the following pages.

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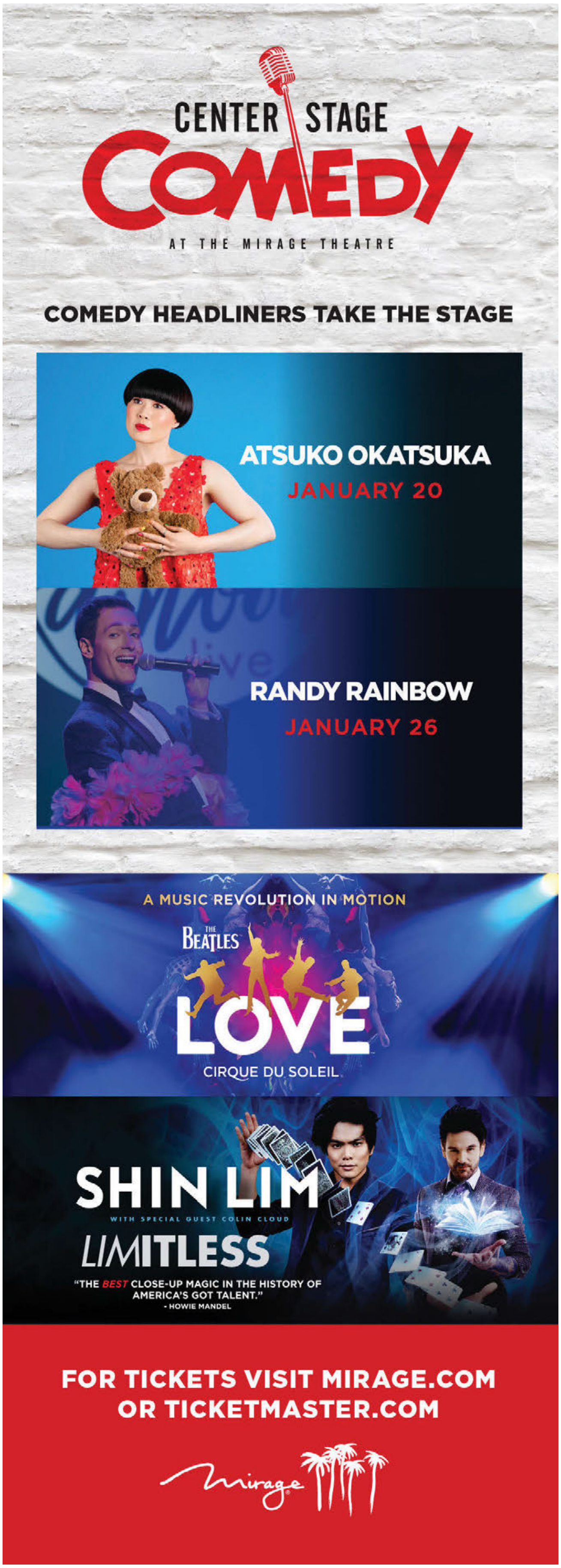
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LAS VEGAS
HALL OF
FAME
2024
MAGAZINE

THESE HONOREES LEAVE INDELIBLE IMPACTS

By Las Vegas Magazine Staff

WHEN DESCRIBING WHAT MAKES LAS VEGAS GREAT, ONE INEVITABLY HAS TO talk about a bit of everything: Shows, attractions, restaurants, nightclubs, individual properties … the list goes on and on. It's in that spirit that we present *Las Vegas Magazine*'s 2024 Hall of Fame class.

On the following pages you'll get the pleasure of discovering some of what makes Las Vegas great, exclusively chosen by our growing list of past Hall of Fame honorees, including Jabbawockeez, *Absinthe*, Carrot Top, Wayne Newton, *Fantasy*, The Las Vegas Aces, Life is Beautiful and Penn & Teller.

The goal of our Hall of Fame is simple: We want to provide you with a list you can check off here and now; after all, we are the premier tourist publication in the Las Vegas Valley—our goal is to help you make the most out of your stay.

Here's to the class of 2024! And here's to you and your enjoyment of the honorees!

THE BEATLES LOVE BY CIRQUE DU SOLEIL

In the 30 years since Cirque arrived in Vegas, it's created a portfolio of conceptual, transformational entertainment on the Strip, each show having its own distinct personality. Only *LOVE* enables Beatlemaniacs to get back to where they once belonged.

Photo by Ethan Miller/Getty Images